A Comparative Study of Instructional Leadership Practices and Collective Decision Making in Public Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipal, Tanzania

Yusto Aron and Onesmo Amos (PhD)
Jordan University College
A Constituent College of St. Augustine University of Tanzania
P.O. Box 1878, Morogoro, Tanzania – East Africa
Contact: *yustoab@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT: *This study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of strategies for enhancing the implementation of instructional leadership practices for collective decision-making in Public Secondary Schools in Morogoro Municipality. This study adopted the Distributed Transformational leadership theories propounded by James Spillane and Bernard Bass. The study adopted a convergent research design under a mixed research approach. Probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed to sample respondents in this study. The study collected data from five (5) Heads of Schools (HoSs) and fifty (50) Teachers using an interview guide and questionnaire. The study found that instructional leadership encompasses the actions and strategies undertaken by school leaders to promote effective teaching practices, curriculum development, and student achievement. Nevertheless, the study also found that instructional leadership is a critical factor influencing teaching quality and student achievement. There is limited understanding of how these practices manifest and interact with collective decision-making structures within school settings. The hypothesis test indicated no significant relationship between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools. This study concluded that school administrators should work on improving instructional leadership practices to enhance collective decision-making. The study also resolved that instructional leadership and collective decision-making jointly create an effective collaborative school environment that focuses on improving teaching and learning outcomes for all students. Therefore, the study recommended Ministry of Education to organize capacity-building programs for HoSs focusing on instructional leadership skills and effective decision-making.*
KEYWORDS: Instructional Leadership, Collective Decision Making, Public Secondary Schools

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the field of education has increasingly recognized the critical role of instructional leadership and collective decision-making in shaping the quality of teaching and learning experiences within schools. Instructional leadership encompasses the actions and strategies undertaken by school leaders to promote effective teaching practices, curriculum development, and student achievement outcomes (Sharif, 2020). Educational leadership skills are therefore essential for driving academic excellence and ensuring that all students have access to high-quality and equitable learning opportunities for their bright future. Correspondingly, collective decision-making emphasizes the importance of collaborative processes among stakeholders (Reina et al., 2021), including teachers, administrators, parents, and students, in shaping school policies, practices, and priorities. For this reason, collective decision-making in school environments is critical to fostering inclusive, transparent, and effective governance structures that promote the well-being and success of all members of the school community.

The recent studies done in Indonesia depicted the upshot of principal instructional and distributed leadership on professional development of teachers in Jakarta, showed that implementing instructional and distributed leadership practices leads to teacher professional development (Amzat et al., 2022). Besides, Hallinger et al. (2020); and Kustati (2020) studied the consequence of principals' leadership on effective learning found that there was a significant correlation between the principals' leadership, characters, and effective learning. Kustati (2020) further insists that the indicators of behaviour and actions of school principals who manage the teachers to conduct learning activity seriously in the classroom became a determining factor in shaping the effective learning paradigm in secondary schools. This infers that, education administrator across the globe rely on establishing guidelines and principles for effective instructional leadership practices rather than involving subordinates. Though, Shava et al. (2021), stressed on sustaining school improvement schools by identifying instructional leadership as a cornerstone for school improvement.

In Tanzania, like many other countries, public secondary schools face various challenges related to educational quality, equity, and inclusivity. While several efforts have been made to improve educational outcomes (MoEST, 2024), there is limited literature specific on collective decision-making. Consequently, there is a need for empirical research to understand the dynamics of instructional leadership and collective decision-making within secondary schools. Despite government initiatives aimed at enhancing educational quality and access, there is limited research examining the effectiveness of instructional leadership practices and the extent of collective decision-making processes within these schools (Cansoy et al., 2022). Some studies suggested that instructional leadership practices are hindered by school headers' inability to build relationships and trust among subordinates and stakeholders. Building relationships and trust among students, teachers, and administrators is crucial for enhancing collective decision-making (Lansing et al., 2023). This implies that harmony, respect, and effective communication promote collective decision-making. This may also suggests the creation of an environment where individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered to collaborate effectively toward achieving common goals (Reina et al., 2021). This fosters a nurturing and supportive school environment where all students are valued, respected, and empowered to excel.

Besides, promoting equity and inclusion in decision-making processes, not only aligns with principles of fairness and social justice (Azlan et al., 2024) but also enhances the quality and effectiveness of collective decision-making by leveraging the diverse strengths and perspectives of all participants. Similarly, reviewed scholars' postulate that resource management plays a critical role in enhancing collective decision-making by providing the framework and tools necessary to allocate resources efficiently, mitigate risks, promote transparency and accountability, adapt to changing circumstances, and engage stakeholders effectively. This study sought to close the vacuum by conducting a comparative analysis of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools across Morogoro Municipality.

1. Statement of the problem

In Tanzania, as in many other developing countries, the quality of education plays a pivotal role in shaping the prospects of students and contributing to national development goals. Amos et al. (2022), contended the insufficiency involvement of subordinates in school development plans impede the delivery of high-quality education in public secondary schools. Despite government efforts to improve educational quality (MoEST, 2024), there remains a pressing need to examine and understand the dynamics of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making within these schools. Most of the reviewed studies focused on School Leadership (Ghamrawi, 2023), participatory leadership approaches (Mbua 2023), instructional supervision (Tarimo & Lekule 2024), challenges facing distributed leadership on students' academic performance (Christopher & Mukadi 2021), and the role of educational planning (Ndhlovu & Sawe 2022). The scanty studies on the matter have been a potential barrier to identifying effective leadership strategies and collaborative processes that can contribute to school improvement initiatives and enhance educational outcomes for all students. Consequently, this study sought to make a comparative study of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania

Research Objectives, Questions and Hypothesis
General objectives
This study is aiming at providing an in-depth understanding of strategies for enhancing the implementation of instructional leadership practices for collective decision-making in Public Secondary Schools, in Morogoro Municipality.

Specific objectives
- To highlight the instructional leadership practices in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality.
- To establish the relationship between instructional leadership and collective decision-making processes in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality.

Research questions

- How do heads of schools' practices instructional leadership in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipal?
- To what extent does instructional leadership relate to collective decision-making processes in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality?

Research hypothesis

- There is a significant relationship between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED THEORIES

This section contains reviews of two theories related to the comparative study of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. The basic concepts of the theories are described, and the strengths and weaknesses of each are analyzed as well as the application of the theories in the context of this study.

Distributed leadership theory was developed and popularized by James P. Spillane and Peter Gronn between the late 1990s and early 2000s. In 2007, Alma Harris through her works on distributed leadership in the context of school improvement; contributed to the theoretical development and empirical research on how distributed leadership can enhance organizational effectiveness (Tejeiro, 2024). The theory posits that leadership is not the sole responsibility of a single individual but is distributed across various members of an organization (Nadeem, 2024). In the context of instructional leadership in schools, this theory emphasizes the importance of sharing leadership responsibilities among administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders (Tejeiro, 2024). School leaders facilitate collective decision-making processes by empowering teachers and staff to take on leadership roles related to instructional improvement initiatives (Nadeem, 2024). Nevertheless, the Weaknesses of Distributed Leadership Theory include: Resistance to Change particularly if there is a strong tradition of centralized decision-making, and Potential for Power Struggles among employees (Irvine, 2021).

Transformational leadership theory was initiated by James V. Downton, Jr., in 1973 and then developed through the work of James MacGregor Burns, who promoted the term in his book titled Leadership in 1978. According to Reza (2019), the theory was further expanded by Bernard M. Bass, and Bruce J. Avolio through their publication titled Transformational Leadership in 1994. The theory focuses on the ability of leaders to inspire and motivate followers to achieve collective goals (Reza, 2019). Transformational leaders in secondary schools cultivate a shared vision for instructional improvement and actively engage teachers and staff in the decision-making process (Kilag et al., 2024). By fostering a culture of collaboration and empowerment, transformational leaders promote collective ownership of school goals and initiatives.

However, the Weakness of Transformational Leadership theory is a dependency on a leader's charisma, which may in turn lead to reliance on personality rather than the effectiveness of leadership practices (Reza 2019).

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Instructional Leadership Practices

In Qatar, Ghamrawi (2023) made a study titled "Toward Agenda 2030 in Education: Policies and Practices for Effective School Leadership". This study employed a case study research design and gathered information from high-level policy-makers from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. This signifies that the case study design only involved qualitative data collection methods, leaving behind quantitative data as a result the concept of instructional leadership was partially covered. For this reason, therefore it was relevant for the current study to be undertaken by employing a mixed research approach to bring a comprehensive understanding of the topic in secondary school settings. Likewise, the previous study presented a panoramic picture of school leadership in Qatar governmental schools. The study also showed that school principals were more managers than leaders. Their time was absorbed with a relatively large volume of administrative tasks that left them with little time for practising instructional leadership, which has been considered a core for leveraging education quality as per Agenda 2030. Moreover, school autonomy was very limited. Almost all essential leadership roles that characterize school leaders according to the international literature were taken over by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. This left a very narrow margin for them to practice leadership. Despite the substantial contribution to the study of instructional leadership, his study was only centered on high-level policy-makers at the ministry level leading to the need for further study of the instructional leadership and decision-making at the school level.

In Cameron, Mbua (2023) studied the principal's participatory leadership approaches: an effective tool for teacher effectiveness in the Fako division. This study applied correlational design purpose, and data were collected by drawing a sample of 600 respondents, that is, 588 teachers and 22 principals spread across 5 sub-divisions in Fako Division. This signifies that the study adopted a quantitative research approach which mainly considers numerical data (Tamminen & Poucher 2020), leaving behind other useful non-numerical data for a deeper understanding of the topic, hence creating a need for more studies. The study found that participatory decision-making, democratic leadership, and collective leadership styles significantly exerted a positive impact on teachers' effectiveness. Ultimately, the findings suggest that principals should properly use the combinations of participatory decision-making, democratic leadership, and collective leadership styles since they are significant in teacher effectiveness in secondary schools. Despite the tremendous contribution of the study on instructional leadership and collective decision-making, the study didn't bring in-depth explanations of how collective decision-making comes into existence. For this reason, more studies are needed to bring such a deep understanding by employing a research design that gathers both qualitative and quantitative data.

Furthermore, Ludigo et al. (2023) studied leadership behaviors and commitment of teachers in secondary schools in an urban setting in Uganda. Based on the positivist paradigm, the researchers adopted the survey research design with a sample of 252 teachers provided data using a self-administered questionnaire. This implies that the study only dealt with quantitative data. Under the quantitative approach, non-numerical data are usually not considered (Park et al., 2020), leaving an essential for further study to bring more understanding to the notice.

The findings of the study revealed that directive and supportive leadership behaviors positively and significantly influenced the commitment of teachers. However, participative leadership behaviors negatively and insignificantly influenced the commitment of teachers. The study introduced the concept of leadership style that enhances teachers' job commitment leaving behind the concept of decision-making. For this reason, additional studies were highly needed to bring a broad understanding of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in the school context.

Likewise, Tarimo and Lekule (2024) studied the effect of instructional supervision on educational quality in secondary schools in Kaham District, Tanzania. The study employed a convergent mixed research approach, in which both qualitative and quantitative are collected, analyzed, and interpreted simultaneously (Kasirye, 2024). The study involved 157 respondents (142 teachers, 5 heads of schools, 5 school board members, 4 ward educational officers, and 1 district educational officer). The findings indicate that when instructional supervision is effective, it significantly contributes to teacher professional growth which in turn contributes to optimizing the quality of education. The findings also indicated that for instructional supervision to be effective, school leaders are to promote a culture of academic excellence, by ensuring conducive teaching and learning environment. Moreover, classroom visits should be regarded as supporting and encouraging teachers rather than a faulty finding strategy. The study brought an in-depth understanding of instructional supervision, which is among the key roles of an instructional leader. However, this study neither made a comparative study on instructional supervision among schools nor connected the supervision role and decision-making. This resulted in the demand for further studies on the variation of instructional leadership practices among public secondary schools.

In Morogoro municipality, Christopher and Mukadi (2021), studied challenges facing distributed leadership on students' academic performance in secondary schools, and the study used a mixed research approach in which both purposive and random sampling were used, in selecting 40 respondents for the study. The findings revealed that distributed leadership influences students' academic performance, through sharing of ideas and collaboration among school leaders, teachers, and other school members. This study brought an important contribution to the study of collective decision-making by instructional leaders. However, their study didn't include varieties of instructional leadership practices concerning decision-making, hence leading to the demand for more studies.

Instructional Leadership Practices and Collective Decision Making

In Malaysia, Azlan et al. (2024) carried out a study on school leaders' leadership practices and their influence on crisis-related problem-solving and decision-making. The study employed a qualitative research approach where a series of semi-structured interviews were carried out with six secondary school leaders, aged 55 to 59, from three different education district offices in a northern Malaysian state. However, under the qualitative research approach only non-numerical data are involved but sometimes may be subjected to inaccurate results and researcher bias (Erciyes 2020), hence creating a need for further studies on the topic. The current study aims to employ a mixed research approach in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data for an in-depth understanding of the topic. The findings of this study highlight

the critical importance of strategic problem-solving and decision-making in overcoming challenges faced by schools. It also highlights how effective leadership ensures the resilience and success of a school, its community, and relevant stakeholders by fostering a supportive and collaborative environment, promoting proactive problem-solving, and prioritizing service to students and staff during a crisis. The study findings aligned with Amos et al. (2022) who claimed that stakeholders' involvement in collective decision-making enhances the provision of quality education. Apart from a useful concept introduced by the study on instructional leadership in decision-making, no link between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making was established. More studies are therefore needed to accommodate such ideas.

In Nigeria, Thompson, Wilson and Umoh (2024) studied principals' leadership practices and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in the Uyo educational zone of Akwa Ibom state. The study adopted a predictive research design where questionnaires were used to collect data from 471 teachers selected using multistage sampling techniques. This implies that the researchers used a quantitative research approach. Nevertheless, Park et al. (2020) claimed that under a quantitative research approach, non-numerical data are not involved. This leads to partial coverage of the topic under study as a result extra studies using a mixed research approach are still needed for more comprehensive knowledge. The findings of this study revealed that principals' leadership practices have a strong influence on teachers' job performance. This has made a meaningful contribution to the study of instructional leadership practices and their consequences for teachers. Nevertheless, the study didn't show the impacts of instructional leadership on decision-making leading to an incomplete understanding of how principals' leadership practices influence teachers' job performance. This knowledge gap has created a need for the current study on comparative study between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making.

In Rwanda, Musengamana et al. (2024) studied the teachers' Role in the School Decision-Making Process: A Case Study of Teachers and School Leaders' Perceptions in Rwanda Public Secondary Schools. Their study employed a qualitative approach in which data were collected using semi-structured online interviews with 10 respondents interviewed at different times. This denotes that, in this study, only non-numerical data were considered. Nevertheless, the approach employed in the study may be subjected to researchers' bias and inaccuracy due to the lack of multi-nature data (Erciyes, 2020). For this reason, more studies are highly needed to bring an in-depth understanding of the topic. The findings of their study revealed that the promotion of collaboration and collectivism is enhanced among the school community members. It plays a significant part in augmenting instructors' work happiness and motivation. This study made a good contribution to the study of instructional leadership and collective decision-making in school settings. However, the study didn't bring to the notice, the correlation between instructional leadership and collective decision-making, leading to the necessity for the current study.

In Tanzania, Chikoyo (2023) studied schools' heads' leadership styles in influencing teacher attrition in public secondary schools. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design with a sample size of 140 respondents. The study adopted simple random and snowball sampling for in-service teachers and those who had left teaching respectively. This implies that the study

adopted a positivist research philosophy in which only quantitative data are considered. However, the approach used in this study may limit the possibilities of capturing a comprehensive picture of the concept under study (Park et al., 2020). Therefore the current study aimed at applying the mixed research approach to bring in-depth knowledge on the topic. The findings revealed that autocratic leadership style had much influence on teacher attrition. Also, the study found that heads of schools' responsibilities influence teacher attrition. This study has brought significant input to the study of instructional leadership. However, the study failed to bridge the school heads' leadership practices and decision-making hence the current study has an in-depth knowledge of instructional leadership and collective decision-making in school settings.

In Morogoro, Ndhlovu and Sawe (2022) studied the role of educational planning in ensuring quality education in Morogoro municipality. The study adopted the survey research design and involved 46 respondents. This implies that the adopted research design enabled the researcher to gather only mathematical data. Nonetheless, DeFranzo and DeFranzo (2023) claim that, in survey research design respondents may not feel encouraged to provide accurate, honest answers. Therefore, more studies using a mixed research approach to counteract the weaknesses associated with a single design are needed for a deeper understanding of the topic. The findings of this study revealed that Tanzania employs the Social Demand Approach of educational planning. Quality education indicators were presented as evidence of the role played by educational planning in ensuring quality. However, the study tried to highlight the role of educational planning in shaping the provision of quality education. This is important since it is one of the fundamental roles of an instructional leader. Nevertheless, there are limited studies done in the context of Morogoro municipality that are centered on the comparative study of instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making. The current study aimed at bringing such knowledge to the context of Morogoro municipality public secondary schools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research philosophy shapes researchers' perspectives on the nature of knowledge, truth, and the research process (Kasirye, 2024; Tamminen & Poucher, 2020; Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). The philosophy prioritizes real-world relevance and effectiveness. This offers a framework for conducting research, which is responsive to the complexities and practical concerns of the world (Gillespie et al., 2024; McCombes, 2023). Under this study, the pragmatic research philosophy was applied to study the instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. A strategy for answering the research question using empirical data (research design) was selected. This implies that the selection of a design has a tremendous impact on the research findings. This study employed a convergent research design to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The study area has a total number of 56 Secondary schools, (27 non-government and 29 public schools) (TAMISEMI, 2023). This study specifically dealt with public-owned secondary schools within the municipality. For an easy study population of the study, a small representative group (sample) was selected to represent the entire group. Sampling allows data to be collected faster and at a lower cost than attempting to reach every member of the population (Turner, 2020). For this study, the sample was drawn from the study area, where teachers were selected from

5 public secondary schools by using Simple Random Sampling techniques. On the other hand, the Heads of schools were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The sample size of this study included; 5 Heads of secondary schools, and 50 secondary school teachers, from 5 public secondary schools. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, and an interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. The hypothesis test was established by using the Simple Linear Regression technique at a significant level of 0.05. Ethical standards were observed by obtaining informed consent from participants (Head of Schools and Teachers) before collecting data, ensuring confidentiality and participant anonymity in reporting and storing data, and obtaining approval from the relevant JUCO Head of Education department.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section focuses on the presentation of the results from this study mainly concentrated on the comparative study of instructional leadership and collective decision-making within public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. In this study, quantitative and qualitative data were collected through questionnaires and interview guides respectively to gather valuable insights from Heads of Schools (HoSs)' and teachers on instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools. A detailed presentation of teachers' perspectives is outlined in Table 1. This section also provides information derived from HoSs' face to face interviews.

Table 1: Teachers Response on Instructional Leadership Practices (n=50)

S/N	STATEMENT	RESPONSES (%)						
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN	SDV
1	The school leaders provide clear direction.	0.0	6.0	10.0	60.0	24.0	4.02	0.769
2	The school leadership supports teaching and learning	0.0	2.0	16.0	44.0	38.0	4.18	0.774
3	The school leadership focuses on setting clear academic goals for students and teachers.	2.0	0.0	10.0	42.0	46.0	4.30	0.814
4	The school leadership team collaboratively develops and communicates instructional goals.	2.0	2.0	16.0	42.0	38.0	4.12	0.895
5	The school leaders actively engage in classroom observations.	2.0	2.0	8.0	42.0	46.0	4.28	0.858
6	Professional development opportunities are aligned with school leadership priorities.	6.0	6.0	18.0	40.0	30.0	3.82	1.119
7	The school leadership fosters a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning.	2.0	4.0	18.0	46.0	30.0	3.98	0.915
8	The school leadership promotes creativity in teaching methods	0.0	8.0	20.0	42.0	30.0	3.94	0.913
9	The school management promotes equity in decision-making at your school	2.0	6.0	20.0	42.0	30.0	3.92	0.966
10	The school management involves all staff members in managing school resources	4.0	18.0	16.0	30.0	32.0	3.68	1.220
11	The school management promotes a professional learning community for all teachers at your school	4.0	8.0	12.0	32.0	44.0	4.04	0.124

Note that: 1. SD = Strongly Disagree 2. D = Disagree 3. N = Neutral   4. A = Agree
     5. =Strongly Agree, SDV = Standard Deviation

Source: Field Data (2024)

Data in Table 1 indicates majority (84.0%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that the school leaders provide clear direction with a Mean score of 4.02. This denotes that teachers are aware of the direction provided by their Heads of Schools. Additionally, the majority (88.0%) of respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that the school leadership focuses on setting clear academic goals for students and teachers by an average score of 4.30. This implies that HoSs play an important role in planning for effective teaching and learning, hence enabling teachers to fulfill their obligations of enhancing quality teaching and learning for effective students' academic achievements. It may also signify that school administrators create conducive teaching and learning environment. These findings imply that the school management team sets and communicates clear goals and objectives to teachers, hence resulting in effective implementation of their daily practices under the guidance of directions given by the HoSs. This is in line with Kustati (2020) who claimed that principals' leadership practices are widely seen as an important factor in embodying an effective school. This shows that teachers' efficiency depends on their supervisors' directions. This supports the information given by the HoS D claimed that;
Teachers' efficiency is highly influenced by the way their school head communicates the strategies and goals to all teachers (HoS D, Personal Communication, April 30, 2024).

The information given by the HoS D means teachers need constant instructions and directives from heads of schools. This finding implies that the school management team must set goals, communicate the goals to teachers, and involve them in setting strategies for effective implementation. These findings correlate with Transformational leadership theory which insists that HoSs cultivate a shared vision for instructional improvement and actively engage teachers and staff in the decision-making process (Kilag et al., 2024).

Data in Table 1 displays 80.0% of participants agreed and strongly agreed that the school leadership team collaboratively develops and communicates instructional goals with a mean score of 4.12. This signifies that school leaders are actively building a conducive environment for team building and collaboration among teachers within the school. Also, 88.0% of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that the school leaders firmly take part in classroom observations with a mean score of 4.28. This connotes that school leaders are actively making close follow up to maintain the quality of teaching and learning practices at the school. These findings denote that the HoSs' behaviour has a substantial impact on teaching and learning improvement, and plays a significant role in promoting innovation at school. The findings support Mulinge (2024) who insisted that classroom visitations by principals significantly influence students' academic performance.

Moreover, 76.0% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that school leadership fosters a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning at a mean score of 3.98. These are aligned with Kilag, et al., (2023) who suggested that effective school leadership requires a strong focus on building relationships, a commitment to student learning, ongoing teachers' professional development, and collaboration. This supports the information given by HoSs B and E who said;

> *Free participation in different issues of the school, staff meetings, parent meetings, and leaders sharing different ideas and plans enhance continuous students' academic*

achievements. The reason why most public schools perform poorly is the lack of this freedom which destroys stakeholders' morale to contribute to school improvement (HoSs B & E, Personal Communication, April 25 & 30, 2024).

The information collected from HoSs B and E indicated that heads of schools promote the provision of quality education by fostering collaboration, effective communication, and continuous improvements. These findings infer that effective instructional leadership practices must involve teamwork, classroom observation, and effective communication. These findings connect to Transformational leadership theory which contends that transformational leaders empower teachers and other stakeholders to participate in the implementation of educational innovation initiatives and create a positive and supportive learning environment that fosters growth and development (Kilag, et al 2024).

Additionally, a big number (76.0%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that the school management promotes a professional learning community for all teachers at school with a mean score of 4.04. This symbolizes that public secondary school heads promote internal school professional development through peer training that enhances constant improvements in school operations. Similarly, the majority (70%) of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that Professional development opportunities are aligned with school leadership priorities equivalent to the mean score of 3.82. This indicates that effective instructional leadership promotes professional development for effective teaching and learning processes in schools. Moreover, 72% of respondents (mean score of 3.94) agreed and strongly agreed that school leadership promotes creativity in teaching methods. This denotes that further teachers' professional training should be implemented in public schools to capacitate teachers for effective teaching. These findings correlate with the information given by HoS D who recommended that; *The government should be advised to organize and conduct special training for school heads, particularly on instructional leadership skills (Head of School D, Personal Communication, April 29, 2024).*

The information gathered from the HoS D shows that government intervention in professional development is highly needed for the effective implementation of instructional leadership practices. This finding denotes the inadequacy of instructional leadership practices among the majority of the school heads. This finding is supported by the transformational leadership theory which emphasizes on evolution of educational leadership practices and school improvement (Nadeem, 2024). The theory implies that continuous training for HoSs and teachers on instructional leadership is imperative for successful school management. The findings revealed that key instructional leadership practices that positively influence collective decision-making include; teachers' professional development, support for teaching and learning processes, classroom visitation, creating a conducive teaching and learning environment, classroom observation, and feedback, which play essential roles in shaping decision-making dynamics in the school settings.

Additionally, it was established that collective decision-making processes in public secondary schools include; stakeholders' engagement in decision-making, provision of resources to support decision-making, communicating goals to stakeholders, and strengthening of positive relationships between school leaders and stakeholders. A presentation of teachers' views on

these data is outlined in Table 2. Under this section also additional information derived from interviews conducted with individual school heads are provided.

Table 2: Teachers' Response on Collective Decision-making (n=50)

S/N	STATEMENT	RESPONSES (%)						
		SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN	SDV
1	The school leadership effectively promotes a shared vision for teaching and learning.	6.0	0.0	6.0	58.0	30.0	4.06	0.956
2	The school leaders actively involve stakeholders in decision-making processes.	4.0	4.0	20.0	56.0	16.0	3.76	0.916
3	The school leaders provide support and resources to facilitate collective decision-making.	0.0	4.0	26.0	44.0	26.0	3.92	0.829
4	The school leaders effectively communicate goals for collective decision-making.	0.0	6.0	10.0	56.0	28.0	4.06	0.793
5	Collective decision-making processes in school involve input from various stakeholders.	0.0	2.0	18.0	50.0	30.0	4.08	0.752
6	The decision-making process in your school is transparent, with clear communication of decisions and rationale.	4.0	2.0	36.0	30	28.0	3.76	1.021
7	Stakeholders in your school feel empowered to contribute to decision-making processes.	2.0	4.0	28.0	36.0	30.0	3.88	0.961
8	Decisions made collectively in your school are effectively implemented.	2.0	4.0	18.0	48.0	28	3.96	0.903
9	The outcomes of collective decision-making in school positively impact teaching and learning.	0.0	10.0	12.0	48.0	30	3.98	0.915
10	Collective decision-making contributes to a sense of ownership and commitment among school stakeholders.	14.0	0.0	14.0	40.0	32.0	3.90	1.015
11	Decision making process in your school, differ from other schools.	4.0	12.0	12.0	38.0	34.0	3.86	1.143

Key: 1. SD = Strongly Disagree   2. D = Disagree   3. N = Neutral   4. A = Agree 5. =Strongly Agree, SDV = Standard Deviation

Source: Field Data (2024)

Data in Table 2 indicates majority (88.0%) of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that school leadership effectively promotes a shared vision for teaching and learning by an average score of 4.06. This denotes that instructional leaders usually emphasise and interpret the school vision of teaching and learning to all school stakeholders. This finding aligns with Shaked (2024), who claimed that effective instructional leadership encourages a shared vision for instructional improvement and actively engages teachers and staff in decision-making processes. This aligns with the evidence given by HoS E who mentioned that; *clear and*

effective decision-making must involve many stakeholders within the school. (HoS E, Personal Communication, April 30, 2024). The information given by HoS E means that for any decision made within the school settings whose implementation involves several stakeholders, collective decision-making is inevitable, otherwise, its implementation may encounter barriers that lead to failure. This finding connotes that the involvement of all stakeholders in school vision and planning promotes effective implementation. The findings adhere to the Distributed Leadership theory which contends on more collaborative, inclusive approach where decision-making is decentralized, responsibilities are distributed across stakeholders, and there's a concerted effort to leverage collective expertise for organizational enhancement (Nadeem, 2024).

Data in Table 2 displays that 84% of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that the school leaders effectively communicate goals for collective decision-making by an average score of 4.06. This means that the school management team sets goals, and after setting the goals they should persuasively convey them to their subordinates. This finding is in line with Thompson (2024), who claimed that a good leader makes others work willingly through communication, motivation, and guidance. This shows that successful instructional leaders are the one who motivates and effectively communicates goals to the subordinates, and guide them throughout implementation processes. This supports the information provided by HoS B who claimed that; *The school leadership conducts regular meetings with the staff members where, among other things, they remind each other of school goals and strategies for accomplishing them. Moreover, the departments are usually encouraged to set their mechanisms for effective implementations (HoS B, Personal Communication, April 25, 2024).* The information given by HoS B signifies that communicating the school vision and strategies for implementation should be the lifelong behaviour of each school leader for sustainable school development. This finding implies that the ability of school heads to communicate goals and persuade individual departments to set their mechanisms for implementation influences collective decision-making in schools. The finding ties to transformational leadership theory that accentuates collaboration and empowering teachers and other stakeholders to participate in the implementation of educational innovation initiatives (Kilag et al., 2024).

Information in Table 2 shows majority (80.0%) of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the collective decision-making processes in school involve input from various stakeholders at a mean score of 4.08. This signifies that school stakeholders feel valued as a part and parcel of the school community, and hence, participate fully in implementations. Moreover, the same Table displays 70.0% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the school leaders provide support and resources to facilitate collective decision-making at a mean score of 3.92. This denotes that instructional leadership creates school supportive atmosphere for collective decision-making by providing stakeholders with all needed information, time, and materials for decision. These findings align with Kilag et al. (2023) who claimed that stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes enhances overall school effectiveness, as it instills a sense of ownership and support for school initiatives. This supports information given by the HoS D who said that;

> *Involving stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and the school board develops a sense of ownership among them resulting in building strong relationships and a sense of*

collective accountability in dealing with school challenges. This enhances community trust in their respective government (HoS D, Personal Communication, April 29, 2024).

The evidence given by HoS D denotes that Heads of Schools involve stakeholders and enhance effective communications within the school to instill a sense of ownership among them. This finding denotes that stakeholders' involvement in school decision-making promotes inclusivity, improves decision quality, fosters accountability, and eventually contributes to the overall effectiveness and success of educational institutions. The findings correlate with Distributed Leadership Theory in which Tejeiro (2024) claims that in the context of education, emphasizes the importance of sharing leadership responsibilities among administrators, teachers, parents, students, and other stakeholders

Table 2 indicates majority (66.0%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that Stakeholders in school feel empowered to contribute to decision-making processes at a mean score of 3.88. This leads to greater commitment to implementing decisions and fosters a sense of collective accountability. Similarly, 76.0% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that decisions made collectively in school are effectively implemented (mean score of 3.96). This denotes that stakeholder involvement increases the likelihood of successful implementation of decisions, particularly when those affected by a decision are involved in its formulation; they are more likely to support and actively participate in its execution. These findings are aligned with Shava, et al. (2021), who claimed that a leader's ability to enhance teaching and learning is motivational strategies, collaborative decision-making, and interpersonal skills, which should be essential for leadership and key to Instructional Leadership. This supports information posed by HoS D that; *involving stakeholders in decision-making simplifies the implementation of decisions and plans, for instance, all students at this school are eating lunch at school as a result of parents' contributions agreed upon during stakeholders' meetings (HoS D, Personal Communication, April 29, 2024).* The information given by HoS D means that stakeholders' involvement is imperative for the effective implementation of decisions and plans. This finding implies that effective implementation of various programs or projects within the school depends on stakeholders' involvement in all stages of its development. These findings align with what Kilag, et al., (2024) said when trying to describe the Distributed leadership Theory, which insisted that leadership is not the sole responsibility of a single individual but is distributed across various members of an organization.

Data in Table 2 shows 78.0% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the outcomes of collective decision-making in school positively impact teaching and learning at a mean score of 3.98. This connotes that collaborative decision-making provides teachers with enough data related to curriculum requirements, school academic goals, and priorities which are useful in lesson and instruction planning for effective learning. This finding is lined up with Kilag et al. (2023) who insisted that the importance of professional development and emphasis on collaboration are all interconnected and support each other in creating a successful learning environment. This supports the information gained from HoS A who said that; *collective decision-making has resulted in the implementation of form four academic camps and remedial classes for form three to form one without any extra-duty payments to teachers. These initiatives result in good academic performance (HoS A, Personal Communication, April 29,*

2024). This means that involving stakeholders in all stages of program design and implementation results in self-commitment in execution. This finding implies that collective decision-making stimulates self-motivation among staff members to work hard even without considering compensation, hence increasing learners' achievements.

Information from Table 2 indicates 72.9% of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that collective decision-making contributes to a sense of ownership and commitment among school stakeholders by an average score of 3.90. This implies that school stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and community members feel responsible for making sure the school excels in terms of safety, academics, infrastructure, and leadership. This finding is aligned with Spillane and Sun (2022) who contended that cultivating relationships among staff and parents generates resources such as information, positive regard, and a sense of ownership for the school and its improvement efforts. Regular meetings with stakeholders increase the sense of concern and belonging of all school stakeholders in managing school programs (Zaid et al., 2022). This finding supports the information given by HoS D who claimed that; *parents' engagement in school development affairs has resulted in building a sense of school ownership among them which has led to good student academic performance (Head of School D, Personal Communication, Monday 29th April, 2024).* This finding connotes that involving stakeholders in various stages of school plan implementation provides them with a wide opportunity to contribute their valuable inputs that results in more successful implementation of the plans.

To establish the relationship between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making, a simple linear regression statistical technique was employed to test the Null Hypothesis (H_0), which stated that there is no significant relationship between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. The decision rule was established at a significant level of 0.05 (2-tailed), guided by assumptions of normal distribution of data and no significant outliers. The output of the test is attached as Table 3.

Table 3: Hypothesis Test ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.010	1	.010	.772	.402[b]
	Residual	.116	9	.013		
	Total	.126	10			

    a. Dependent Variable: DECISION

    b. Predictors: (Constant), INSTRUCTIONAL

Source: Field Data (2024)

From Table 3, the data indicates the p-value of the statistical test was 0.402 at a significance level of 0.05. This denotes that a p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, henceforth the stated hypothesis was accepted as there is no significant relationship between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making in public secondary

schools in Morogoro Municipality. This denotes that, necessary efforts are needed to enhance instructional leadership practices that boost collective decision-making in public secondary schools. This may also imply the existence of top-down communication network that hinder subordinates' involvement in school development plans through bottom approach. By so doing, educational administrators are in position to stimulate teaching and learning that maximizes learners' achievement in line with Distributed Leadership Theory which insists on the significance of interconnectivity and collaboration instead of a top-down leadership framework.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary
The study revealed that effective instructional leaders understand the importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making processes related to school management, planning, teaching, and learning. They recognize that teachers, who are closest to the students, often have valuable insights into what instructional strategies are most effective. By involving teachers and other stakeholders in decision-making processes, instructional leaders can tap into this expertise and make decisions that are more likely to positively impact students' learning outcomes. Similarly, collective decision-making is enhanced by strong instructional leadership. When leaders provide a clear vision for academic success and create a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement, stakeholders are more likely to actively participate in decision-making processes. Instructional leaders also facilitate the decision-making process by providing relevant data, resources, and support to stakeholders, ensuring that decisions are informed and aligned with the school's goals and priorities.

The tested hypothesis established that instructional leadership and collective decision-making work hand in hand to create a collaborative and effective school environment focused on improving teaching and learning outcomes for all students. The relationship between instructional leadership and collective decision-making is symbiotic. Therefore, schools with poor instructional leadership tend to limit stakeholders' participation in decision-making hence negatively affecting teaching and learning within such schools.

Conclusion
The findings of this study established that HoSs in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipal are struggling to enhance effective instructional leadership practices that positively influence Collective decision-making in school settings. That's why the tested hypothesis revealed that there is no significant relationship between instructional leadership and collective decision-making, contrary to the Transformation Leadership Theory. Furthermore, the study contended that educational administrators should work on improving instructional leadership practices to enhance collective decision-making to maximize educational quality. The study also underscored that instructional leadership and collective decision-making jointly create an effective collaborative school environment that focuses on improving teaching and learning outcomes for all students. Consequently, the best way to improve education quality that maximizes students' academic achievements is to invest much in school leadership practices that foster collective decision-making.

Recommendation

Since the study exposed that effective collective decision-making depends on the quality of instructional leadership practices at the school, it was recommended that educational administrators should invest in professional development opportunities that focus on instructional leadership skills and effective decision-making strategies. By equipping educators with the necessary skills and knowledge, they can better lead their teams and contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process within schools. This should be aligned with empowering teachers to take on leadership roles within their departments and further strengthen connection between instructional leadership practices and collective decision-making. When teachers feel empowered to contribute their expertise and insights, it leads to more informed decisions that benefit students and the school as a whole. It is also essential for administrators to keep monitoring the impact of instructional leadership practices on collective decision-making regularly.

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